

Unpublished treatise on the hokku

By Helen Shigeko Isaacson

Groningen, The Netherlands, around 1986

haiku isaacson haikai hokku

THE HOKKU (or Haiku)

(mu)

"Basyoo said, 'In the storehouse of no¹thought, one thing arises. This is what we call hokku'.....The Old Man's Road, as it is the flower of the Great Road, is as large as heaven and earth, and is not dependant on small things like the six principles(of poetry). With words that seem to say one thing but really mean another, he turns the ten thousand things into powder with one swallow. He represents the world of people with flowers and birds, and flowers and birds with the world of people; things that have sentience and things that don't have sentience are mutually made to be each other, while his heart abides in the great mu.¹ He leaves behind reasoning and seeks the dark ², but it is not that he is not-reprimanding people. Thus it is, that his Road is subtly wondrous and the most extremely deep and lofty, difficult to explain with the tongue."³

Basyoo's definition of a hokku is precise and unmistakable. It is just the opposite of what people think it is. A hokku is not what comes from vague "feelings" or "experiences" of our senses-dependant lives, but what flows out from the root consciousness (storehouse, ālāya-vijnāna) when the in-taking senses and discriminating mind stop limiting one. The storehouse or ālāya-vijnāna, the innermost mind, though originally pure (sunyata), may store both impurities and purities. It is an ocean on which the senses constantly create waves or disturbances. When the discriminating mind (manas) stops the flow of in-taking, the ālāya is able to emerge and a hokku can arise.

1 Mu 無 is the mid-point between kyo and zitu, sunyata and asunyata.

2 The deep and unfathomable, the heart's most genuine principle.

3 Basyoo Habune 芭蕉葉舟 (Banana Leaf Boat), 1817, ed. by Ooryuu, revised by Issa and Kooryuu.

The storehouse of mu thought is another expression for Paramaśiva in the Tantric Saivistic system, the source of all manifestations. It is sunya, devoid of all characteristics and thereby contains all characteristics infinitely. Where things are seen to be different is the realm of the manifested world (zitu, śakti) and where things are seen to be the same is the realm of the empty (kyo, śiva). Basyoo's haikai, the play between these, neither resting in one or the other, is a unique solution of how to use words to describe what is impossible to describe. In this one statement we see how the hokku is different from poetry. As Turayuki said in the preface to Kokin'syu, "When we hear the uguisu singing among flowers, or the voice of a frog that dwells in water, who is there who wouldn't compose poetry..." In making poetry, then, it is acknowledged that something we see or hear in the outside world strikes the heart, and the words which come forth can be poetry. In making hokku, however, it should not come from the object which strikes the heart-- just the storehouse of mu thought.

Of course, this cannot be done without the use of objects of the outer world, but having seen, heard and tasted them with the senses, one must next know them without the senses, as it were. Returning to the root (the state of mu-thought), out of the mu-thought one makes rise the hokku. And why? Because "all phenomena, being only the manifestations of the Original Reason, Reality, Noumenon or Spirit of life, are inseparably connected among themselves, and are in harmony with one another like the different waves of the ocean which are only manifestations of the same water."¹

While the practise of Japanese poetry was centered around the makoto (genuineness) of the heart, the practise of haikai defined that makoto to be the realization of the mu thought, because/ ^{it is in this state that} ~~it is in this state that~~ ^{which are requisite for makoto} ~~which are requisite for makoto~~ oneness and universality/existence, and where things as they really are, are known. The hokku is as close a representation of the/Absolute Reality ^{form of} ~~form of~~ which is this oneness, as is possible to express in words. Because the natural process of manifestations is two-ness, there are the ya-kana forces, and because from two-ness comes three-ness, there are three lines.

¹ Yamakami, Systems of Buddhistic Thought, Chapter on Avatamsaka, p. 293.

The hokku is in length one half of a Japanese poem. It has a seasonal word (kigo), two opposing forces of energy, and three lines. The kigo, as one, is a representation of the Oneness which is infinite. The two opposing forces of energy may be thought of as Siva-Sakti, prajna-upaya, the eternal-the changing, space-motion and sound, the out-going and in-coming. The three lines are heaven, man and earth, or the out-going, the being and the in-going, and the three gunas. Whereas poetry is beautiful and smooth, the hokku is rough and immense, seeming to say nothing ~~and~~ yet containing everything.

Akazoosi, p. 401.

The Teacher said: "Heaven and Earth's changes are the seed of huuga". Things which are quiet and calm are the form of no changes. Things which move are changes. If one doesn't stop them for a time, they don't stop. 'To stop' means to stop in sight and sound.

Even in the scattering confusion of falling flowers and leaves, unless one stops the sight and sound in their midst, when they have all fallen, even their life will fade without a trace. Further, there were words from the Teacher in regard to making ku. The lustre of the object being seen-- while it is still in the mind, ^{should be} written down. Again, there are times when the theme ^{(syukoo)¹} is ^{discernible} in the style of the ku. All such things happen when one enters that realm (of the object) and pierces its form when the object has not yet faded away, he taught. In making ku there are two ways-- the ku is made, or one makes the ku.² If one constantly strives inwards³ and accords with things, that heart's colour will become a ku. Those who never practise inwards, (a real ku) will never be made.⁴ Thus, they only make ku depending on their private (self) minds.

1 (see next page)

3 Inwards, i.e., to one's huuga-no makoto, the sincerity of refinement (the a characteristic of oneness).

4 If one does not enter into the huuga-no makoto, the universal genuineness, then whatever is done is only of personal and limited value, not haikai.

2 : when one pierces through to one's root (sincerity), the ku are then made. ^{Otherwise} one strives to make them.

Note 1

Syukoo 趣向 is the word, meaning taste, interest, bent, the plan or scheme of what is to be made. Kikaku in Kikaku Zyuusiti-dyoo

其角十七條, 1689, "Syukoo is not the dai. It is what is added to the dai, whether it be snow, moon, flowers or hototogisu, to make one hokku. The heart should be free (from delusion) 自在, cross over the six directions, and stopping in the midst of 10,000 things, not forget huuga. Thus, in Chinese poetry they distinguish the flowery and the plain, and in Japanese poetry, heart-and-words-accordant is made the root. In haikai, it is the same. It suffices not to be put to shame by moon and flowers; know that they are the teaching and reprimands for human feelings.

Kyorai said, "At the point of making a ku, what you happen to perceive on the occasion is the syukoo; it arises naturally....The two ways of thinking of a ku are: from the syukoo and from words-apparatus. If you enter (the thought) from words-apparatus, most of the ku are quickly made; if you enter from the syukoo, the ku are slow and few. But when we discuss the rank of thought, the ku made from syukoo are superior." (Kyoraisyoo)

"The syukoo of the Old Pond hokku is not a frog singing (as is more common), but a frog jumping." (Imoto, N. et al, Matuo Basyoo-syuu, p.103, Nihon'koten' Bun'gaku, vol. 41.)

"To stop" is the name of one of the perceptions in the Ten'dai School of Buddhism. It is a practise in regard to the secret teachings of things' laksana (characteristics), based on the Three Perceptions (San'gan' 三觀). The Stop Perception 止觀, in Sanskrit, śamatha vipaśyana, is to bring the heart (mind) to the not-moving state under all the outer realms and confused thoughts. ^{by} this is done by ^{fix the mind} fix on a certain object.² To perceive the object is the purpose of the concentration. It is practised for the virtue of helping one separate from too strong a tendency in the zisoo 事相, laksana of things ^{or actions, which} is the opposite of kyoosoo 教相 the laksana of theory. The secret teaching is the mutual practise of these two, theory and action-things. To stop the flow of confused thoughts and penetrate ^{to the nature of} an object is the same as producing wisdom. "Stopping perception is to cross over words and thoughts, and has an absolute meaning".¹

→ *Insert ca.*
Let us take ^{the} the Old Pond hokku, which recorded Basyoo's solution to the ^{a hokku} valid form of ~~haikai~~. Put literally and in the original word order,


Huru-ike ya / kawadu tobi-komu / midu-no oto

Old pond ya / a frog jumps in, ^{the} water's sound.

A number of haizin's comments on this ku have been translated here:

-
1. Nakamura, G. ^{et al.}, A New Buddhist Dictionary, 1962.
 2. Also known as ekacitta, one-pointedness of the mind.

"Those who never practise inwards, (a real ku) will never be made. Thus they only make ku depending on their private (self) minds." These statements indicate that the more important aspect of the practise of making hokku is the perception of one's own mind or heart. It is necessary to see the changes of the outer world of nature, but even more important ^{that} the heart return from its many changes to its true, genuine state. This is done by focusing on "the object being seen" (known as the practise of eka-citta, one pointedness of mind), until that object becomes the total content of the mind, and its lustre comes through. That lustre should be equivalent to the genuineness of huuga-no makoto.

The final meaning of huuga-no makoto (the correct genuineness) is, in the Basyoo School, ~~the~~ genuinely real not empty (sunyata)  in the Prajna Paramita Hridaya. "Thusness, though it is without any determinate character, is possessed of innumerable potentialities from which all determinate or differentiated dharmas are manifested."¹

1 Takakusu, J. The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy, Honolulu 1947, p. 118. The Absolutely Real, "Thusness" is not empty (sunyata), but genuinely real, the final round doctrine of the Mahayana. Hence, thusness is all things as they are manifested in our world: all the seasonal words, in the end equal to the Thusness.

Huru-ike ya

..."When the Old Man was in the Eastern Capital's Hukagawa hut, on a flowers-misty night deep in Spring, he made arise a movement of the heart and the voiceless frog. Past and future's vibrations had stopped, and just in this one water sound, all the pure mind's taste 清意味 is exhausted (all pure meaning is used to the full). He had already developed a distaste for the capital's flowery zitu¹, cut off relations with the vulgar, brushed off his garment and made a pilgrimage to the far northern provinces.....

"When someone said, 'Why not change the first line to yamabuki', the Old Man laughed and didn't answer... if you think about it^(kerria), wouldn't you find that kerria suggests an embellishing form? When form is thrown away, there is no way to show how to get to a hai style. If form is used, it becomes an obstacle to the genuine correctness. He felt ready to cry at a deer that wouldn't call in the darkness² and heard the water's sound^{mu} of a frog on a misty night. He praised the mu-form and admired the mu-voice. People^{what have} eyes should look well..."

1 Here, flowers is taken to be "decorated", shus, in a not-good sense, "decorated actuality".

2 The ku referred to is

ぴいと啼く 尻聲かなし 夜の鹿
Pii-to naku / siri-goe kanasi / yoru-no sika

"Pii" it cries, / its drawn-out voice sad, /night's deer.

- Basyoo

Indeed, "Kerria ya" would transform this ku to one of colour and form.

Basyoo preferred to have no colour, no form, just rough and plain, un-embellished, perfectly natural. It is more natural to say "Old pond ya" than "kerria ya", because a frog is born out of a pond. When it jumps into it, it is merely returning to his root. The object (frog) which was one of the pond's manifestations, disappears back into it, and what is left? the vibration of the movement, as in Aum.

"When form is thrown away, there is no way to show how to get a hai style. If form is used, it becomes an obstacle to the genuine correctness."

The hokku is neither with form nor without, and hence it was called the mu-form.

From Syoomon' Itiyakuzyu, An'ei 2 (1773)

The Basyoo School's One Night Verbal Teaching, by Bakusui

"This ku, some beginners of the Basyoo school think to be a famous, superior ku. It's not true. It is just an ordinary composition of the Old Man. In fact, if one really had to say, I think it's a bit imperfect.¹ But the disciples of the Dyookyoo² times understood the Correct school's heart from this ku, and people of now too, get a lofty feeling from it. It is truly a step-ladder for the Basyoo style. A disciple of Basyoo had a discussion about this ku, saying the first five syllables should be Yamabuki ya (Kerria ya), but he immediately saw why it had to be Huru-ike ya. He was an advanced pupil of those times. This ku should be placed in one's heart and always thought about. I don't intend to try and explain it here...

"The form of his hokku is pure 淳. But very few have received the Basyoo School's spirit....Isn't it because of this composition that the disciples of the Dyookyoo period for the first time opened their eyes to the Correct style? This ku has within it a formless jewel 無形の珠 which causes this. If one perceives this jewel, though one does not bring forth hokku, it is the same as placing one's pleasure in the sabi of the Basyoo School....."

The "formless jewel" is indeed an excellent name for Basyoo's hokku. It throws more light on how those who knew what he had created, understood it. The cintamani 如意, frequently spoken about and depicted in Buddhist

- 1 The Old pond ku represents the first style of Basyoo's three. (see chapter on Basyoo.) Bakusui suggests that each style was better than the previous.
- 2 This is the first period of Basyoo's haikai, from his studies in the Dan'rin School to the Huru Ike ku.

art, is a gem or talisman-pearl which is said to grant everything the heart desires. Some said it was obtained from the palace of the Dragon King under the sea, others from the head of a great fish. The formless jewel contained in the hokku of Basyoo, however, cannot be given any form, nor are its powers, if any, spoken of: it is unspeakable, so lofty is it. One would suggest that it is very similar to that cintamani.

Bakusui goes on, "Supposing the first five letters were kerria, or wisteria, or whatever. If in the first line there is something to see, it would be a composition of form 形, scenery. People of the world praise its calm quietness, or its wabi or sabi, or its hosomi, but it is none of these. It is just a ku on hearing sound. 'Old pond' is only for the sake of saying the frog's sound, not his form. To say 'a frog jumps in' is not that he has seen a frog, but shows the principle of the sound that is in the frog. And so it is with 'water'. Thus, it all comes down to just the word 'sound', and when that is said, the second principle emerges.¹

"If people such as we are think of a ku on sound, we might make it 'a frog jumps in, the sound lonely'. Then the ku is weak, its meaning shallow and not (pleasing) to hear again. Though in an old pond there is water, to say 'water' again (in the last line) is to help us see the Zen root's first principle.² The Sixth Patriarch (Hui Neng)'s one-voiced stone mortar,³ too, its past voice ended, its future voice does not yet echo. All day long, just one voice is it, that could be heard? Here is the point. If one praises the sound, one falls to the second principle. Above the sound there is nothing

¹ Considering that in the final analysis the Zen' method is equivalent to Tantric Saivism and Mahayana Mantrayana, perhaps the first and second principles here mentioned are roughly the first and second tattvas.

² 禪機 Ki means "spring, motive principle, machine, contrivance, occasion, opportunity; basis, root or germ; natural bent, fundamental quality" (Soothill, p. 448).

³ A reference to Hui Neng's period of study with the Fifth Patriarch. He pounded rice for eight months. His teacher came and knocked on the mortar 3 times, and Hui Neng went secretly to him to receive the Teaching and Transmission of the Robe. His formless verse was:

There is no Bodhi-tree
Nor stand of mirror bright,
Since all is sunya,
Where can any dust alight.

to see. Listen to the voice between 'jumps in' and 'sound'. Here is the Formless jewel. As for the meaning, every ku of the Old Man's has this same spirit; however, it is difficult to see it in other ku...."

The word between "jumps in" and "sound" is "water", in Japanese midu (which could also be mizu 水, not see). The ku ends with sound, and sound is the element analyzed by the ancient Indians to be the ^{first} material point in the process of manifestation,¹ before/forms. In the hokku word as power (śakti) is being used to draw the hearer back to the origin of sound (śiva). Bakusui means that all of Basyoo's hokku contain this formless jewel, and hence they are all the same (in heart), and mu in form, because this is the way to be complete with everything.

Here is still another interesting comment on the Old Pond ku:

1 "On the division of the Supreme Bindu (into the threefold Kāma-kalā) there was the Unmanifested Sound'. This unmanifested sound then becomes the letters of the alphabet. (Woodroffe, Garland of Letters p. 174)

Huru-ike ya / kawadu tobikomu / midu-no oto

Kyoya Syoosoko 許野消息 (1785)

(Gabun' Syoosoko 雅文世兄)

Comment by Syoozan' 囃山

Letter from Kyoroku to Yaba

"The Old Man's old pond ku--how does it sound to you? Probably there's no one else who has been able to understand it other than myself. Even Kikaku got confused with yamabuki (kerria), Ran'setu too, when he came to the capital : and was questioned about it, didn't settle this ~~matter~~. Riyuu, Masahide and so on, though I ask them every day, they don't answer. Hokusai, whom the Old Man praised, who lives in Kaga, though he got the aka-aka¹ ku, couldn't at all understand the huru-ike. Nor have Kyorai, Bon'tyoo, or Zyoosoo received the Old Man's subtle smile. "Only you've got it," at Basyoo-an', he said to me. But what about you? Putting aside the meaning, he didn't even say "the frog's voice," but made the frog's jumping into a hokku, --so how is it a superior ku? Everybody says, "It's a great ku, it's a great ku", but nobody really tastes it. As it would be for the sake of the other disciples, putting aside pride, you should ask me. I would tell you as it is a matter between fellow-disciples. In this ku, you should consider very ^{carefully} the relationship made between the frog and the old pond."

Syoozan's comment: ...In general this ku on the surface is fine, and what it stores is wondrous. It is beautiful, and has a fine taste. Again, it contains the taste of sabi, and beyond that still has various other things, so it is hard to tie it up in a bundle and reach its end. The ku makes SABI its body. The haiku before this, for the most part either were comparisons, reasonings, or rhythmical. The Old Man for the first time, discovered the form and feeling (姿情) which can be

* Form and feeling. These correspond to Śakti-Śiva, sound and all manifestations - the heart, upaya-prajna, zitu-kyo, jiyaku-tureki.

1 あかあかと 日は難面と 秋の風

Aka-aka-to / hi-wa turenaku-mo / aki-no kaze

So redly, / the sun still ruthless, / Autumn's wind.

Before this ku Basyoo wrote, "Unable to find consolation for the *grief* of travel, and already grievous Autumn has come. After all, the message of the wind which cannot be seen with the eyes is very sad, and on top of that, as lingering heat continues,..."

The message of the wind refers to the well-known poem in the Kokin'syuu,

秋来ぬと 目にやさかに 見えぬとも

Aki ki-nu-to / me-ni wa sayaka-ni / miene-domo

That Autumn has come, / to the eyes clearly / cannot be seen, but

風の音にぞ おどろかれぬる
kaze-no oto-ni zo / odorokare-nuru

by the sound of the wind / one is startled. Huziwara Tosi-yuki

藤原敏行

follower of Ryoota;

Ooemaru 大江丸 (haizin, 1723-1805) in Haikai-bukuro 俳諧袋 (1802) points out that Basyoo had the following poem by Asikaga Takauzi (1305-1358) in mind:

すまより 明石の方ぞ あかあかと

Suma-yori mo / Akasi-no kata zo / aka-aka-to

More than Suma, / Akasi's {direction} indeed, / redly,

日はつれなくも 秋の風ぞ吹く
hi-wa turenaku-mo / aki kaze-zo huku

with {the sun} ^{so} ruthless / the Autumn wind blows.
{her days}

(note 1 cont'd)

And Masaoka Siki, in Basyoo Zatudan¹, wrote, "he must have stolen
(this ku) from the old poem,

須磨は暮れ 明石の方は あかあかと

Suma-wa kure / Akasi-no kata wa / aka-aka-to

Suma has dusked, / Akasi's {direction} / redly
lady

日 (5) つれなくも 秋風 ぞ 吹く
hi-wa turenaku-mo / aki-kaze zo huku

hi-wa turenaku-mo / aki-kaze zo huku

the sun } still ruthless, / the Autumn wind blows."
her days }

her days }

Well, it is not exactly a matter of plagiarism, but rather, this proves the fact of the power of a syllable and the wondrousness of the teniha in Japanese. Basyoo's ku is different only in the last line, aki-no kaze, where the above poem's last three lines, because the last must be in seven syllables, is longer. With "no", then, it was turned into a hokku. Note that the hokku begins with the third line of the poem, which crosses ^{the} triangles of each half. That the same words have been used in so many poems indicates the importance of these chapters in the Gen'zi, and gives a clue to their real meaning.



equal even to Chinese and Japanese poetry, and this ku is the prime example of this fact. The reason is that there is no simile, it doesn't stop (depend on) just in rhythm, it doesn't reveal its meaning on the surface, nor does it strongly use hai words. It just naturally comes down and holds under it a thought. At his place of retirement by the Edo river, there was an old pond. When it was the high point of Spring, a frog that was walking about the edge of the pond jumped into it from the bank, and the water sound could be heard, "splash!" And from that, the fruits of the plum, peach, and cherry gradually spread; the willow's threads day by day got longer, and from the midst of sprouting grasses, ferns, and all sorts of grasses shot up, and so on. How much the more, in that calm ease, the grass hut with no confusion, the sound of this frog having jumped clearly entering the ears with--"Splash", no words can describe it! "Ah, how Spring's colour has reached its fullness (prime), and this subtle thing (the frog) has obtained its time and place! In heaven and earth's creations, there is no ego (self), how divine and wondrous!--" So he seems alone to have perceived, alone to have composed. In an old collection's discussion of this ku, it says, about all of this ku's wondrous realm, it is difficult to use a brush to tell.

It is Wang Wei's 4-lined poems on the Moo river landscapes -- among the many excellent ones, "The Deer Fence", "The Bamboo Village Pavilion, and

木末芙蓉花

On the tree's ends, hibiscus flowers

山中紅萼

From mountain's center rise the red petals

澗戶寂無人

Valley's door quiet, no people

紛々開且落

In confusion open and again fall.

Or:

人間 桂花 落

In people's midst cinnamon flowers fall

夜 靜 春 山 空

The night calm, Spring's mountain empty

月 出 驚 山 鳥

The moon comes out, startles the mountain birds,

時 鳴 春 澗 中

At times they cry, inside the Spring valley.

When you put all of these together, you obtain to knowing the taste within the Mu 無 taste.

Taking it as a whole, one should see the 'oto' (sound) word as ^{the bone} bones and eyes. Husi (Kikaku) putting yamabuki (instead of old pond) showed the interest of floweriness. As there is water below (in the last line), old pond is a return to foolishness (simplicity) and a sweeping away of an important point. The later period's lightness ^(in haikai) make Husi's style the main point, thus they all dislike using at the top and bottom of one ku a thing of the same heart. ¹

- 1 i.e., The old pond at the top of the ku and water in the bottom of the ku are things of the same heart, a pond containing water.

And here we find a grand point about hokku: the "sweeping away of an important point". One must reach to the highest and most important point in mind or heart, but in the expressing of it, the words must sweep away that point, too, as unimportant. It must seem to be saying nothing, in short. This is an ^{indispensable and} invaluable characteristic of haikai, easiness.

十二夜話 五竹坊

Zyuuniyawa, ed. Gotikuboo I

(Twelve Nights' Conversation)

Huru-ike

Many people praise this ku and say there is deep meaning in this sound of water, thinking there is much feeling in the way the sound of water has been placed in opposition (to ~~that~~ of the frog). Those ~~are~~ thoughts of people who don't know the natural ^{press} of heaven and earth. They think worldly feeling is important. They are wrong. This ku goes from the vastness of an old pond, and with ya, which makes it the scenery in front of the eyes, ~~it~~ goes to the form of a frog jumping in, with the water's sound also ~~being~~ there, showing the forlornness of the environs. Here we should see what is not see-able, and think of what is not in heaven and earth's nature, putting aside what people settle for in words as mere calculations. We should guess at the subtle darkness (yuugen' 幽玄) in hokku. For example,

どのやうな 心 に のびて 谷の 藤

Dono yoo-na / kokoro-ni nobi-te / tani- no huzi

To } what kind of/heart does it stretch out, / the valley's
With } wisteria.

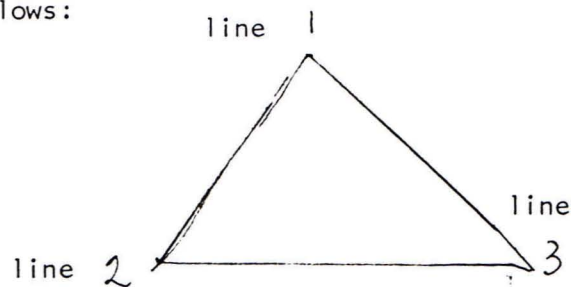
--Basyoo

The scenery of a looming dark valley, too, can be seen in the meaning of the words of the first two lines. The form becomes the feeling, the feeling becomes form-- isn't it all in the composition of these ku?

I date of work not known but
died 1779 (81 yrs) of ^{the} Minoo school established by S. Koo.

There are three interesting points made by Gotikuboo. 1) "They think worldly feeling is important". The entire purpose of practising haikai is to cross over all worldly tastes, so that it is a requisite for one to understand a hokku, to also cross over all worldly tastes. If this is not done, the ku is not being understood, but only a worldly feeling is being brought to it. The reader must refine himself and prepare for participation in it. 2) "the naturalness of heaven and earth" is of course what Basyoo meant the hokku to be--perfectly natural in what it says and how it says. The old pond ku is purely in accordance to the naturalness of heaven and earth. If there is a pond, there may well be a frog by it that will jump in at some point. 3) "we should see what is not see-able, and think of what is not in heaven and earth's nature" -- this is how to obtain to the real understanding of a hokku, and of all valid literature: to look for and see what is not see-able by putting aside what people say about it. One must with one's own heart face the ku and allow it to work its excellence, and learn from it, till one pierces through to the subtly dark (yuugen'). The unsee-able is the subtle dark, but what is "not in heaven and earth's nature"? One can only guess that the meaning may lie in that heaven will not jump into earth as a frog would, but what happens in the ku is as subtly dark as is the natural.

In consideration of all these comments on the Old Pond ku, especially the poignant term, "formless bubble", and that each hokku is really the same, one would suggest that the two layers of meaning it no doubt has are 1) the completely natural occurrence in terms of the season--the zitu, ryuukoo, upaya and 2) the absolute fact of the Kāmakalā (the microcosm of the Sri Yantra) ¹ which contains the seed of manifestation, ^{and} which can be diagramed as follows:



Line one (The old pond ya) represents bindu or Haṁ (one point), ^{śiva,} and lines two and three (the frog jumps in / water's sound) represent Visargah (two points) or Sah, śakti. Kāmakalā, or manifestation of Will, may be said to be the first linear formation of the seed of things (and man) when represented by a triangle, but as such, contains all the dimensions and qualities of its further ^{material} forms. As Haṁsah it is the breath of living beings, and the lowest dimension to which objects can be reduced.

The Yāmala speaks of this abode, "I now speak of Kāmakalā. She is the Eternal One who is the three bindus, the three śaktis and the three forms....Let him think of the three bindus as being in her body indicating Icchā (will, desire), Jñāna (knowledge) and Kriyā (action); Moon, Sun, Fire; Rajas (warrior-likeness), Sattva (goodness), Tamas (dullness); Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra..."²

1 See Appendix, Chapter on Tattvas.

2 Woodroffe, The Garland of Letters, p.171. The triangle represents all the letters of the Sanskrit (and thus, the Japanese) alphabets. Brahma, Visnu and Rudra are the Hindu gods of Sun, Moon and Fire.

As we breath every day, nothing could be more natural and ordinary than a hokku as haṁsah, breath in its gross form.¹ Because ya stands for haṁ and kana-keri for sah, the hokku is going to guide speedily us/back to the origin, the state of One (non-dualities) and the Eternal Truth. It does not matter, the number of veils and layers of dust and over which have accumulated in ,around/the consciousness. By reducing the objects and noise to haṁ and sah the obstacles vanish, or are replaced by only these energies, so that even for a moment, the mind can participate in that eternality, while in the midst of the myriad changes of the world. The hokku is a short-cut on the road of return (equally natural as the road of starting out), and is meant to cancel out all numbers and begin at three, go back to two, and then one. One is, of course indicative of zero and zero of infinity.

Using the manifestations of the seasonal world, the hokku shows the eternal truth of the forces of the kāmakaḷā. The old pond (śiva, is the unmoving, latent power/ prajna), the frog and the sound produced are the moving powers (śakti, upaya) fictitious. There is no/time as we are habituated to understanding-- a succession or sequence, but all is instantaneous and spontaneous. The words say what is changing and flowing (ryuukoo) but hueki (the unchanging) is underlying them. Such is, at least, what Basyoo seems to have meant by the hokku of the Correct way of School, and his/life was in no way contradictory to this thought. Whereas poetry can be made by sensual contact with the outer world, the hokku can only be made when there is no dependancy on the outer world. The only thing that hokku is concerned with is Absolute Fact, and the necessity of human beings' returning to it.

¹ Woodroff, Garland of Letters, p. 157: "The individual breath is the Cosmic Breath from which it seems to be different by the forms which the latter vitalises."

Let us look at another paragraph on the hokku from the Kurozoosi 黒冊子 (The Black Notebook)¹: "The hokku has the taste of a heart which goes and returns. For example, like the ku

山里付 萬歳 おそし 梅の花

Yama-sato-wa / man'zai ososi / ume-no hana --Basyoo

For a mountain village, / the man'zai² is late; /
plum flowers.

Saying 'For a mountain village, the man'zai is late', we return to the meaning: the plum flowers have bloomed. In this way it has the heart of going and returning, and that is a hokku. The single layer of saying only 'For a mountain village, the man'zai is late' has the rank of a hira-ku.³ Our late Teacher said, 'The hokku is something that is put together', so it is written in a book of hai.⁴ Only once in a while does it emerge from inside the dai. If this happens, for the most part it is old,' he said."

The first two lines of the above ku make a simple observation-- such as an ordinary 'ku in kasen' need only say. There is a break at ososi, as if the outbreath is finished, and with ume-no hana, something like an inbreath, as plum tree is an object which belongs to the mountain village of the first line. The mountain village, as an idea unit representing a large, collective object, is similar to the old pond. In fact,

1 ed. by Tohoo, disciple of Basyoo. It is uncertain as to the exact date of completion, somewhere around 1702. One of the San'zoosi (Three Notebooks), Kurozoosi is also known as Wasure-midu (Forgotten Water).

2 Man'zai: Good Wishers of 10,000 Years, this term applies to a dancer-singer and drummer who went about from the 2nd day of the New Year, from house to house, to sing auspiciousness and long life for all. As they usually went round the cities first, it could be towards the end of the First Month by the time they reached deep mountain villages, and plum flowers may well be blooming.

3 Ordinary ku in kasen ren'ga, except for the first four and the last.

4 Uda-Hoosi, ed. by Kyoroku, seems to be the book referred to here. also appears in Takine-ron, Travel-Sleep Discussions, ed. Kyorai, pub. 1761

these hokku are exactly the same, only..the frog has jumped into the pond, and the man'zai have not yet entered the village, but no doubt will. The last lines, with water's sound and plum flowers in bloom with their perfume, exude the same vibrations. With the objects of the last line, we return to the concept of the first lines, completing a circle (or triangle)-- having started out from a point, the line returns to that point. The man'zai, being human beings, are part of some village, and though they may for a while wander outside of it, return at New Year's.

Going and returning is like the outbreath and inbreath, or starting out with a point and drawing a circle back to the point. It is an expression, like "returning to the old native village", meaning to complete the return to one's root or origin (the pure state). Being born as a human being, one starts out, accumulates many veils, and at a certain point, one begins the return, unveiling the veils, till one arrives at the pure state which is one's origin.

In the "putting together" of idea units, we can see in these two ku that the first lines begin with a broad object containing many other smaller ones; the second lines introduce one of those objects which may be contained in the first, broad one, with action or something implying action. The third line has again an object which may be considered to be a part of the first, broad one.

In the Tabine-ron' appears this passage: "Someone asked: 'The late Teacher said, 'The hokku is something that is put together. If two things are taken and well put together, one is skillful, we say'. This statement appears in Kyoroku's records. Then is it so that in the teaching of the Basyoo school the hokku does not exist in one thing?"

"Kyorai answered: 'That was one of the ways the late Teacher taught. We heard this first when he was teaching at Zeze, and many people found it useful. I always get into discussions with Syadoo, and thereafter, when I was at his place, the late Teacher said, 'Your hokku are all only made by putting together two or three things. The hokku should be made in a way as though one is stretching gold out.' In every way, our late Teacher taught his disciples. One should not only listen to one part. (His teachings) varied according to people's ways of composing, their habits. To dull people like me, he always said, 'You shouldn't put your thought into the ku, just make the words strong.' And about Bon'tyoo's ku he said, 'As the hokku is made within 17 syllables, not even one syllable should be placed in vain'. Again, 'Though it is haikai, as it is one line of huuga, one should not give it a low (vulgar) form'. Aside from these statements, it was common knowledge to all that he taught each disciple in a different way.

"In general, it is not that the hokku cannot exist in one thing. I will give you some examples. First, a ku made on one thing:

毛衣に つゝみて ぬくし 鴨の足

Ke-goromo-ni / tutumi-te nukusi / kamo-no asi

--Basyoo

In fur garments / wrapped, very warm, / the wild duck's feet.

"The hokku is something that is put together" was in general a statement of instruction for those whose limitations required thinking of it in those terms. Equally, however, it seems to indicate the principles of the Middle Way and the interdependence/and oneness of all things, as proven in various Buddhist schools of thought, and which is revealed in the hokku as well as throughout the kasen'. Still, the idea units must be placed in such order as to simultaneously break and unify the parts.

"Only once in a while does it (the hokku) emerge from inside the dai"-- of this Kyoroku elaborated in conversations with Kyorai:¹

¹ From Kazitu-syuu *花実集* (Flowers' Actuality Collection), ed. by Kyorai, pub. 1773; also in Kyoraisyoo, Chapter on Practice.

Kyoroku said: "The hokku should be made from outside the sphere (realm, area) of the dai.² It doesn't exist inside its sphere. If one exists naturally inside it, it is of heaven's nature, and is rare!"

Kyorai said: "It is not that a hokku does not exist in the sphere (of the dai). In the case of (ku made on) the spur^{and interest} of the moment there are many of them which are inside the sphere of the dai. As the dai are always being thought about, inside (the sphere) there are few, and if there are any, they are probably what people of old left over (as dregs). If you run out a thousand leagues and compose, not only are there many ku, you miss the best ones. Rankoku's haikai everyday is inside the sphere. When I spoke to him about it he made the ku:

明月に みなさかゆきを 剃りにけり

Meigetū-ni / mina sakayuki-wo / sori-ni keri

For the year's moon / everyone³ their sakayuki / they shaved keri

I altered it to:

さかゆきを みな 剃り立て せしむかひ

Sakayuki-wo / mina sori-tate-te / sasi-mukai

The sakayuki / all shaven clean, / face to face:⁴

Beginners should think about this well. After one acquires skill, there is no discussion about inside or outside (the sphere of the dai)."

2 The sphere of the dai seems to mean the area or environment in which the kigo exists.

During this period, men shaved the hair from the forehead to the top of the head, and this was called sakayuki, its shape like a half moon.

There seems to be no seasonal word in this version. It is possible that sakayuki was taken as a half-moon, or the second reading for this compound 月代 tukisiro, meaning the moon, was assumed.

Again, this way of speaking seems an upaya for those who tend to make little ku, for the hokku must be vast. To make the hokku from outside that sphere of the kigo does seem to help on this point. Among The ku cited by Kyorai as examples of "inside the sphere" and "outside the sphere" are:¹

春もヤヤ けしきととのふ 月と梅

Haru-mo yaya / kesiki totonou / tuki-to ume

Spring, too, at last, / its landscape comes to order, /
the moon and plum-flowers.

---Basyoo

卯の花に あしけの馬の夜明けかな

Uno hana-ni / asige-no uma-no / yo-ake kana

Among deutzia / a grey-dappled horse's / dawn kana

--Kyoroku

So as those who would tend to entangle themselves in this way of thinking, Basyoo said that the hokku is "talk about the dai", and "in making many ku, one who gets tired of the self of yesterday, one can improve them".²

As for the difference between a hokku and any other ku, there is the description by Kyorai: "The hokku is like a tree, but there are branches and a root. The ku added (in kasen') are like branches."³

Again, in the same work:

1 In Tabine-ron'

(Travel-sleep discussions), ed. Kyorai, 1761.

2 Ibid.

3 Kyorai-syoo, Chapter on Old Realities

" Bonen asked: 'What about the boundary between a hokku and a take-ku (ku which is added or written to the previous given ku in ren'ga)?'

" Kyorai said: 'The hokku is where the seven feelings stop in a myriad landscapes. Ku which are added are ordinary. For example, to say 'a bush warbler stops on a plum tree and sings' does not become a hokku, but 'a bush warbler with his body upside down singing' becomes a hokku.'

" Again (Bonen) asked: 'Then, is whatever that stops in the heart able to become a hokku?'

" Kyorai said: 'There are that which become hokku and that which do not. For example,

ツキ出さや 戸通のつまりの 蟾
Tuki-dasu ya / toi-no tumari-no / hikigaeru

It sticks out ya / (where) the bamboo conduit is dammed, / a toad.

-- Koosyun' 好春

" Some people think this ku is like the Old Pond ku of our late Teacher. No doubt it has some interest and may move the heart, but it cannot become a hokku."¹

¹ Ibid.
(Kyorai-kyo, Chapter on Old Realities 故実)

We see immediately the world of difference between the Old Pond ku and the toad ku given above. The entire thought in the toad ku is trivial and only a descriptive statement. Although ya is used, it is a mere exclamation. There is no motion, no opposition of forces, and the idea units have a static relationship. For, of course, in the end, the one complete thought in the hokku is most important.

This brings us to the matter of the seventeen syllables in a hokku. It is explained in the Abhidharma¹ that a complete thought-moment consists of seventeen bhavaṅga.² "When a material object is presented to the mind through one of the five sense-doors, a thought-process occurs, consisting of a series of separate thought-moments leading one to the other in a particular, uniform order. This order is known as the citta-niyāma (psychic order). As a rule, for a complete perception of a physical object through one of the sense-doors, precisely 17 thought-moments must pass. As such the time duration of matter is fixed at 17 thought-moments. After the expiration of that time-limit, one fundamental unit of matter perishes, giving birth to another unit. The first moment is regarded as genesis, the last as dissolution, and the interval 15 moments as decay or development."

1. Abhidharma is the third part of the Tripitaka, the Canon of Buddhism, it is made of the śāstras or discussions of the teachings. The first compilation is attributed to Mahā Kaśyapa. According to Soothill (A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms, 1937), this word was

defined by Buddhaghosa as the law or truth (dharma) which goes beyond or behind (abhi) the law.

2. Bhavanga : "Bhava + aṅga = factor of life, or indispensable cause or condition of existence. One experiences only one thought-moment at any particular time. No two thought-moments coexist...It is similar to the consciousness one experiences at the initial moment of conception and at the final moment of death. This type of consciousness is in Abhidhamma termed bhavaṅga. Like any other consciousness it also consists of three aspects-- genesis, static and cessation. Arising and perishing every moment, it flows on like a stream, not remaining the same for two consecutive moments." (Nārada Mahā Thera, A Manual of Abhidhamma, 1975, pp.163-164.)

3. Ibid.